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### Transport and Environment Studies (TEST)

TEST is an independent research and consultancy group, founded in 1972 to provide a multidisciplinary service in the fields of planning, transport, and environment. Early projects investigated the environmental impact of the movement of goods and people in modern industrial societies, for clients such as the UK Department of the Environment, OECD, and the Transport and Road Research Laboratory. Other studies analysed the energy advantages of the transfer of road freight to rail, investigated environmental and planning aspects of the Kuala Lumpur Transportation Study, and evaluated alternative alignments for a rail-link which had been proposed as part of the Maplin Airport Project. TEST involvement in this field has continued with an 18-months study for the Department of the Environment entitled 'Improving the Pedestrian's Environment'.

Increasing involvement in environmental impact analysis has, however, broadened the scope of our operations. Although TEST has never exceeded a dozen full-time members, close links are maintained with the Economics, Planning, Engineering, and Biological Sciences, faculties of a number of universities, and with other research agencies in the environmental field. The basis of TEST's approach has been the use of small, multidisciplinary teams—an approach made possible by our ability to call on a wide range of specialist advice for particular projects. From time to time, work is carried out jointly with consulting engineers, planners, and economists, which helps to maintain a greater flexibility and expertise in the face of changing needs.

While the analysis of environmental impact is still a paramount concern, we are also concerned to see environmental planning mature from an essentially curative to a preventive discipline, tailoring development to suit identified environmental constraints rather than sewing patches on a damaged environmental fabric. A recent project which involved elements of both approaches was the Ismailia Master-plan Study, where TEST was a member of an international planning consortium engaged in the

reconstruction and development of the Ismailia subregion, Egypt.

Our Ismailia brief was to explore the possible environmental and ecological implications of proposed development. Given that a substantial area of semi-arid land was to be reclaimed for agriculture, one area of research was the possible spread of parasitic diseases such as schistosomiasis, and so control measures were identified to suit different land-use policies. Accelerated eutrophication was another consideration, particularly in Lake Timsah and the Bitter Lakes. The programme for the expansion of Ismailia was monitored for any sources of water enrichment or pollution, and a sewage farm was relocated to preserve recreational areas on Lake Timsah. But our major concern was the potential impact of land reclamation projects and new agricultural techniques on Lake Manzala, the largest of the Delta Lakes, and its associated wetlands. The probable impact on fisheries and wildlife were evaluated, as far as existing data allowed, and a preliminary study was undertaken into the feasibility of improving the traditional lake fisheries alongside the development of intensive fish-farming projects.

Support was given to the proposal that 'biosphere reserves' be established in the Manzala area—an idea advanced by Professor Maher Ali, Chairman of the Department of Plant Protection at Assiut University. Since the Ismailia Master-plan was presented to the Egyptian Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, as well as to the United Nations Development Programme, in March 1976, TEST has continued research into pressing environmental problems in the same general region—particularly into desertification, desert reclamation, and the opportunities for (and constraints upon) economic development projects in wetland areas.

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### Turkey to Conserve the Sultan Marshes

Turkey has cancelled a project to drain the Sultansazligi, one of the most important marshes in the country, following representations from the World Wildlife Fund and other conservation organizations. We consider this to be one of the most significant contributions to the 1976 campaign for wetland conservation, which is being conducted by the Council of Europe and associated organizations.

The 14,000 hectares of fresh and saline marshes, which lie in south-central Turkey some 150 kilometres north of Adana, attract each year a reported several hundred thousand ducks and geese, 25–30,000 waders, 17–42,000 flamingos,

3–4,000 storks, 1,500–2,000 cranes, and 2,000–2,500 herons, as well as many other birds. The State Water Authority had planned to drain the marshes, but decided not to proceed with the project following representations which pointed out the importance of wetlands for conservation of water resources for surrounding areas, as vital habitat for a wide range of wild species, and for scientific research and recreation.

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